

effective on the telephone. But do you know who they said provides the most courteous, knowledgeable, and efficient telephone customer service in the country? The Social Security Administration of the United States Government. I am very proud of that, and you should be, too.

The operators at Social Security are some of the thousands of people who are proving the skeptics wrong, people who think Government can never do anything right. Because of their hard work, we know we can balance the budget without cutting education and risking our children's future. But I will say again, we have to make some decisions.

When I became President—I just want to mention one other—I asked the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Commerce to work together to make sure we started promoting America's economic interest overseas. I have had 100 business people in the last 2 years tell me that for the first time in their entire business lives, every time they go to another country, the State Department is working for them. I have never talked to a business person who has extensive dealings overseas who doesn't tell me that the Commerce Department is more effective in promoting the interests of American businesses and American jobs around the world than at any time in the past. That is also part of reinventing Government. We want you to get more for your money, not just reduce the size of Government.

This can happen, but we need to continue to do this. This has to be a continuous process. Our goal, the Vice President's and mine, is to build this into the culture of Government so that no future administration can fail to embrace this. Our goal is to make this a part of the daily lives, the breathing, the working habits of every manager in the Government, every Federal employee, everybody. We want them to think about it because, believe me, there are

still things that go on every day in the Government that the President can't know about, the Vice President can't know about, but that will affect the lives and the interests and the feelings of the American people.

But we are making a difference. Now we have to decide in this budget debate how we're going to cut, how we're going to balance the budget. This is just like the productivity changes that many large American companies underwent throughout the 1980's. I know we can keep doing this. I know we can do more than even we think we can do. I know we can.

But this is the sort of thing we ought to be doing. And it would be a great mistake if in the next 90 days, in the desire to balance the budget, which I share fully and which we started and which has taken us from a \$290 billion deficit to \$160 billion deficit, we became penny-wise and pound-foolish. And we forgot that one of the reasons we're doing this is to make sure that the money left can advance the cause of America's economic interest and the basic values of the American people to give every citizen the chance to live up to his or her God-given capacity, to keep the American dream alive, and to give us a chance to come together in a prosperous, secure, and exciting future. That is ultimately, ultimately, the great benefit of this whole effort.

So I ask you to continue to support it and, as we come to this budget debate, to say, we do not, we do not have to make the wrong choices for the right objective. We can balance the budget and we can do it in the right way and reinventing Government proves it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:15 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Norman Rice of Seattle, WA.

Remarks at a Clinton/Gore '96 Dinner *September 7, 1995*

Thank you very much. Thank you all for your wonderful welcome. What a way to come back from vacation. I want to thank Fred Baron and

Larry Stewart so much for the work they did to help bring us all together tonight. I want to thank all of you for being here and for the

contributions you have made to our campaign. Many of you are old friends of mine, and I'm glad to see you again. Some of you I have never seen before, and I hope I have a chance to shake a few more hands before I leave tonight.

I thank Terry McAuliffe and his fine staff, all of them, for the work they have done, and I want to thank my good friend John Breau, not the least—so many reasons I have to thank him for—for finally giving me credit for where he got that joke. [Laughter] Pretty funny, don't you think?

I told him another story he didn't tell tonight, which illustrates another point about what's going on in Washington today, which is that one of my laws of American politics which people—everybody tends to be for change in general but against it in particular. So it's important to know what the fine print is in these contracts.

The same minister he talked about was having trouble getting his congregation to exercise, so he worked his heart out on a sermon that he thought would finally inflame his congregation. And he was going on and on and pumping, and they were saying "Amen" and ginning. And finally he got to the punch line, and he said, "I want everybody in this congregation who wants to go to Heaven to stand up." Everybody leapt to their feet, except this one old lady on the front row that hadn't missed a Sunday in church in 45 years. And he was crestfallen. He said, "Well, Sister Jones, don't you want to go to Heaven when you die?" And then she jumped up. She said, "I'm sorry, Preacher, I thought you was trying to get up a load to go right now." [Laughter] It's very important to get the fine print of these contracts.

I want to tell you, I've had a wonderful experience with the American people in the last few weeks. My family and I had the opportunity to go to Wyoming, as I'm sure you know, on vacation, and we got to spend a lot of time in Grand Teton and Yellowstone National Parks. And I had the opportunity there as President to defend the national parks and the importance of preserving and maintaining them in this budget battle. I wish every young person in our country could go to one.

I also had an opportunity to talk to a lot of Westerners who, you know, think that one of their hands would fall off if they ever voted for a Democrat, because they're so used to, you know, disliking the Federal Government, and they've got us identified with them. You

know, it's interesting, the Republicans, if they hate the Government so much, why do you suppose they've devoted a whole generation to trying to take it all over? [Laughter] They lost the White House for 2½ years, and they missed it so much they can't bear to give it up. [Laughter]

But anyway, I talked to a lot of people, then I went to Hawaii and represented our country at the last of the many wonderful occasions commemorating the 50th anniversary of World War II. And I got an incredible sense of the diversity of this great country, meeting again, as—I'm always overwhelmed by this incredible generation of Americans that literally saved our way of life and paved the way for all the prosperity and the security and the victory we had in the cold war.

My State had one of those Japanese internment camps in World War II, and I met a couple—it's an incredible story—that met and got married in the internment camp in Arkansas. And the man had volunteered to join the service, and they sent him to Mississippi to train, and he said he got hungry for Japanese food. And they said the only place you can get anything is internment camp in Arkansas. [Laughter] So he went over and met his wife there, he said, "We're the only two Japanese-Americans who actually are glad those camps were set up. We had our marriage there."

I met another Japanese-American who came here on his own, was thrown into a camp, volunteered to join the military, got out, and by the grace of God, the war ended the day before he was about to be sent to an island where he would have been in combat against two of his brothers who were in uniform for the Japanese. But the atomic bomb had ended the war, damaged his own home, injured his mother, and killed one of his other brothers.

This is an incredible country. We come from all different backgrounds and all different walks of life. And we've come a long way in the last 50 years.

When I ran for President in 1992, I did it because I thought we were not making the changes we needed to make to get ready for the 21st century. I did it because I thought that we had not seriously come to grips with the economic and social challenges of the time. And I said I would try to change the economic direction and the social direction of the country, to try to move us forward and bring us together.

And virtually everything I've talked about doing, except the fight we lost on health care, we've succeeded on.

The deficit was \$290 billion a year when I took office; it's going to be \$160 billion this year. It's come down for 3 years in a row for the first time since Harry Truman was President. For 6 years, there had—[*applause*]*—*thank you—for 6 years, the American people watched Congress condemn the crime problem in America and do nothing about it and just fight over this crime bill. We passed the crime bill. It puts 100,000 more police on the street, has prevention programs to give our kids something to say yes to, has stiffer punishment for serious offenses, and contained the assault weapons ban that was so controversial. A lot of Members of our party laid down their seats in Congress for that because their voters were told they were going to lose their guns. Next November they'll see they didn't lose their guns, but there are a bunch of criminals that don't have Uzis in the schools and on the streets, and they did the right thing, and we were glad to do it.

I was concerned, before it became fashionable up here, about the problems of welfare, because I think the welfare system is bad for everybody that's involved in it the way it is. It perpetrates dependency, but it doesn't liberate anybody. But it's a pretty bad way to live.

And when the Congress did not act on welfare reform under our Executive order, we just gave States the authority to do what they wanted by getting out of under the existing Federal rules. Now, 34 States have adopted their own reforms that we've approved.

The other party and their Presidents often condemned Federal power and said they wanted more passed back to State and local government, but we gave States and localities more authority to change their welfare systems and their health care systems in 2½ years than they did in 12 years. And those are important things to do.

For 7 years, Congress and the President argued about a simple little law that 175 other countries had to guarantee people that they wouldn't lose their jobs if they had to take a little time off work when their families needed it, if they got sick or their children got sick or their parents got sick, the family and medical leave law. It was the first law I signed as President. We just celebrated the second anniversary of that law at the National Institutes of Health with a lot of parents who have children with

cancer who are struggling along. But those parents at least still have their jobs now because of that law, and not a single, solitary business in America has gone broke because of it. But the other guys said that they would.

So I'm proud of the fact that the United States has been a leader in the cause of peace, from the Middle East to Northern Ireland to Southern Africa to Haiti. I met a woman tonight whose got a young son in uniform in Haiti. And I'll tell you, that's an amazing story that has never fully been told. It's the most totally integrated, planned, and executed military operation in the history of this country which, thank God, did not require us to fire a shot. But it had an enormous positive impact, the ability of the United States to be a force for peace and democracy and freedom throughout our hemisphere. And I'm very, very proud of all the young men and women who engaged in it. And I am very proud of all the young people in uniform who are part of the NATO operation in Bosnia, which is going to give us a chance to make a decent, honorable peace there and stop the slaughter of innocent civilians.

And as John Breaux said, the economic consequences of what we've tried to do have been, I think, quite impressive. We now have well over 7 million new jobs in 30 months; 2½ million new American homeowners; new small businesses starting in America at a rate of 750,000 a year, by far the highest rate on an annual basis since the end of World War II when we started keeping such statistics; the combined rates of unemployment and inflation are at about a nearly 30-year low; the stock market has hit 4,700, profits at an all-time high. I'm pretty pleased by that.

We've had more new self-made millionaires in America in each of the first 2 years I was President than at any time in the history of the United States. We are clearly, clearly, the most entrepreneurial, flexible, open, forward-looking major country in the world right now. And we have the right kind of partnership between business and Government. Our Commerce Department, our State Department have worked hard to help sell American products overseas. We've expanded trade by more than at any time in modern history. These things are going well.

So you might ask yourself: If that's all true, how come they won in the election last November? And I think there are some important an-

swers to that question as we look ahead to '96. And I'd like to talk about it very briefly.

Number one, they talk better than our guys do sometimes. [*Laughter*] They talk about hating the Government. We reduced it. There are 160,000 fewer people working for the Federal Government today than there were the day I became President. We're going to have the smallest Federal Government since Kennedy was President if they don't do anything in this year. We have abolished thousands of pages of Federal regulations. We have abolished hundreds of Government programs. We've begun to make Government work again.

The Small Business Administration cut its budget by 40 percent and doubled the loan volume. Business Week wrote an article a couple of months ago about evaluating all these major companies that have to use the telephone, for who had the best quality telephone service, L.L. Bean and Federal Express and all these companies that really depend on phone service. You know who they said had the best, most courteous, most enlightening telephone service in the United States? The Social Security Administration of the United States Government—Business Week—not an arm of the Democratic Party—Business Week.

So they did that. They talk better. They wave the contract. It sounded like a good idea. But more importantly, a lot of people hadn't felt the positive benefits of the things we've done. There's a time lag between when you do something in Government and when people feel it. But more profoundly than that, there is a lot of unease and uncertainty in our country because we're going through a period of change as profound as the change we went through when we became an industrial society out of an agricultural society. That is the fundamental lesson of this time. And that is why your voice and your work and your convictions are so important. This is a time of historic importance for citizenship.

I've really spent a lot of time trying to come to grips with all the things that are going on in this country and in ordinary people's lives. I read a significant percentage of the mail I get from ordinary citizens. I set up a separate zip code when I became President for the people that I went to grade school and junior high and high school with, most of whom are ordinary, hard-working, middle class people to write

me letters so I could know what they were going through.

And I'm telling you, I believe that the period we're living through is the most profound period of change since roughly the time between 1895 and 1916 when we decided how we were going to respond to the fact that we were a great industrial power. And we had to define what the role of Government was going to be and what the purpose of our common existence as Americans was going to be.

We started out with dealing with the antitrust laws, because we decided we needed competition, not monopoly in America. Theodore Roosevelt told us we had to preserve our natural resources. We couldn't just develop it all and leave nothing for our children and our grandchildren and posterity. We had child labor laws because it wasn't right to make kids work in factories and mines 6 days a week, 10, 12, 14 hours a day. And finally, in 1916 the Congress even adopted an income tax so that there would be some proportionally fair way to raise the money that had to be spent to further the public interest.

That 20-year period was a very tumultuous time. And people's lives were changing a lot, and they were trying to come to grips with it. The elections were kind of close and sometimes inconsistent because we were working our way through that. That's what's happening now. The cold war is over. We're moving into a global economy where most of the conflicts will not be as cataclysmic as the threat of one nation bombing another into oblivion. I'm proud of the fact that there are no Russian missiles pointed at this country for the first time since the dawn of the nuclear age, since our administration came in.

But don't be fooled. We still have problems. We thwarted terrorist attempts to set off a bomb in the Lincoln Tunnel, to blow up a plane going across the Pacific. We dealt with the World Trade Center, as well as the problem in Oklahoma City. You see what happened to the Japanese when they had that religious fanatic explode the—or break open the little vial of sarin gas in the subway, or whenever a car bomb blows up in Israel—all this is a part of the new security threat as groups, distinct groups, begin to break apart from the whole and the consensus that binds us together as civilized people.

Economically, you see this incredible thing. We've got 7 million new jobs. But if I had told you 30 months ago on the day I was inaugurated, I said, here's what's going to happen in 30 months: We'll have 7 million jobs, 2½ new homeowners, 1½ new businesses, the stock market will be at 4,700, corporate profits will be at an all-time high, and the median wage will drop one percent. So that after 2½ years most hourly wage earners will be working a longer work week for a lower wage, once you adjust for inflation. You might not have believed that, but it happened.

So the bedrock middle class people of this country worry whether the American dream is supposed to work. They keep reading these great numbers, and they say, "What about me? I don't feel more secure. I don't feel more prosperous. I'm concerned."

I say this to you not to be down. I'm actually very hopeful about the future. If you wanted to bet on the future of any major country in the world today for 50 years from now, you'd have to bet on the United States, because of our economic strength, because of our diversity, because of our creativity.

But we have two great challenges and alternative explanations at work in Washington today about how best to meet those challenges. We have to face the future together, because we're going to live in a global society, which means we have to get along with people who are different from we are—from ourselves—different in terms of their religious views, different in terms of their racial backgrounds, different in terms of their ethnic heritage, different in terms of their politics. We've got to find a way to get along, because teamwork wins in the global economy, not division.

The second thing we have to find a way to do is to always be thinking about the future. How are we going to grow the middle class and shrink the under class and keep the American dream alive?

Now, one explanation that we hear all the time is that all we have to do is destroy the Federal Government, and everything will be hunky-dory. All we have to do to make middle class people's wages grow again, if they happen to be white and male, is to get rid of affirmative action or get tough on welfare or immigration.

Let me tell you something—again this is the difference in talking and doing. Our administration has done more than the last two to reform

affirmative action, to fix it, number one; to change welfare; and to take on the problems of illegal immigration and the whole problem of immigration generally. We are trying to do the things that ought to be done. But let's not forget what's really happening to the middle class is the global economy, the technology revolution, the downward pressure on wages of people who can't command high incomes because of their education and skill.

So if we really want to turn it around, yes, we have to reform the systems of Government and all of that, but let's not kid ourselves. Average people need protection. Great institutions of power in the private sector need accountability. And we need to recognize that we have got to work together and work for the future if you really want to raise incomes and have a good future for the United States. That's my theory.

And when you see this fight we're going to have over the budget here, which I hope will end in reasoned, principled compromise on common ground and higher ground, but which cannot, cannot, result in just abandoning the ordinary citizens of this country, when we need to guarantee that their parents and little kids will have health care; we need to make sure that everybody will have access to education to make the most of their own lives; we need to make sure that the environment and clean air and clean water and public health generally are protected—we're going to have a debate. And I believe the answer is, we've got to work together and work for the future.

The alternative vision is, "What we need to do is keep everybody torn up and upset and hating the Federal Government and blaming somebody else for their problems." Now, those are the two big paradigms here. And if you go back to the period between 1895 and 1916, you will see exactly the same thing. But you shouldn't be upset about it. You should be glad that you were given the opportunity to be an American citizen at a once-in-a-hundred-years time of change because it means you are going to have a chance to shape the future for another hundred years. You have an opportunity to decide what kind of world your children and your grandchildren and their children will grow up in. And the next 90 days in this budget, not because of how much money is spent on program X, Y, or Z but because it will say what

kind of people we are. That will help to define it.

Several of you have told me tonight that you were in Camden Yards in Baltimore with me last night when Cal Ripken broke Lou Gehrig's record. Why was everybody so happy about that? Everybody loves seeing somebody who was successful that no one could resent. Why? Because here's a guy who showed up for work every day, right? [Laughter] Showed up for work every day and did it well, and had a good time doing it, but displayed the kind of constancy and teamwork that we all respect.

Did you ever ask yourself, why is it that in our citizenship, in our voting habits, we reward the kind of behavior that we would not tolerate on a baseball team or in a business or a community organization or a church or a family? You think of any operation you are a part of, what makes it work? People who are interested in unity, not division; people who are looking to the future; people who are optimistic and upbeat; and people, if they spent all their time—anybody in any of these operations spent their time trying to divide people in the group against one another, you would run them off. You would get rid of them. Here, we elect them. [Laughter] Now, why is that? Why is that?

Because every one of us wakes up every day with a little scale inside: hope on one side; fear on the other. And sometimes we vote based on how the scales are balanced. And we're all for change, but you know, the average person is just trying to keep body and soul together, trying to do what Cal Ripken does, showing up for work every day. One reason that's so popular is most of the people that were in that baseball stadium last night are the same kind of people. They show up for work every day. They work when they don't feel good. They work when the weather's bad. They work to earn money to do right by their children. They are the people that keep this country going. But they see the play which plays itself out in Washington indirectly, not directly. You have to bring it home directly. You can do it because you, every one of you, in a different way, touches the lives of those kinds of people.

And it's not that I'm going to be right on every issue. But I'll tell you what, I'm on their side. And I'm thinking about their future and their children's future and their grandchildren's future. And I know that in a time of change, what makes a country work is the same thing that makes a team work, a business work, a church work, a family work. You've got to pull together, and you've got to work for tomorrow. And you've got to think about everybody, everybody.

So every issue you're interested in, that's how I am going to evaluate it. How is it going to affect the ordinary person? How is it going to affect these families that are struggling to hold body and soul together? How is it going to affect the dreams people have of the future? That's really what we ought to be doing. And I say to you, you should be very, very happy. You should think it is a privilege that you happen to be alive and at the peak of your influence and energy at a time when your country needs your energy, your knowledge, your experience, your ability, and your determination. This only happens about once every 100 years.

And we are the longest lasting democracy in history because every time it's happened to us before, we did the right thing. We got started right. We fought the Civil War, and it came out right. We stayed together, and we got rid of slavery. We went through this vast economic change, the first big one. Then we dealt with the Depression, World War II, and the cold war. Now we're going through our second vast economic change. So I say, sign up, saddle up, throw your shoulders back, smile, have good time, and we will prevail.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:55 p.m. in the Mayflower Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to fundraisers Frederick M. Baron and Larry Stewart; Terence McAuliffe, national finance chairman, Clinton/Gore '96; and Senator John Breaux, chairman of the next majority trust, Democratic Senate Campaign Committee.